361 desert with its limited opportunities for finding means of
311 sustenance has been held the only possible answer to the rigors of the geographical environment.

This view, however, can be challenged. In the Arabian peninsula nomadism may be inevitable, but with regards to the potentially cultivable areas of Iraq, Syria, Palestine and Transjordan, for centuries used by the tribes as grazing grounds for their flocks, the situation is different. The land was not always barren, vast stretches of fertile soil turned into desert because of the nomads whose destructive way of living was victorious, where settled society was not powerful enough to check Bedouin incursions.

361 While the nomads contribute their share to the general
433 economy, it cannot be maintained that the roving existence is a geographical necessity. The nomad is general responds and adapts himself to the desert, but sometimes he actually creates it. Only on a higher level of civilization is the attempt made by people to liberate themselves from the limitations of the environment. In the past and at present settlers have often displayed the tendency to modify the land to suit them. The relationship of man towards the land did the amount of care he gives the soil that sustains him can serve as a measuring rod for the standards of his civilization.

361 Prosperity in the Middle East of antiquity was the result
311 of intelligent utilization of land and water resources. Present day devastation is to a great extent the outcome of Bedouin economy and neglect.

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361 going in the wake of profound political, economic and social
X166 changes
178 a. political

The national governments of the Bedouin-inhabited countries, unwilling to have the tribes under their territorial jurisdiction remain as a separate social unit outside the national community, consider their permanent settlement on land absolutely essential to insure stability and progress. They are aware that, once the nomads become tied to the soil, the tribal system will begin to disintegrate and cease being a "state within a state." By controlling the Bedouin and encouraging their sedentarization, the administrations are putting an end to the special political status which the tribes enjoyed on the borders of the desert.

b. economic

361 With the conquest of the desert by modern means of trans-
X166 portation the camel-breeding industry of the true Bedouin has
178 been severely hit. Enforcement of public security destroyed
●1133 additional sources of livelihood, such as the plunder of caravans, inter-tribal raiding and the extortion of khuwa[1] from village communities and weaker semi-nomadic tribes. Extension of cultivation in the area is rapidly limiting the wandering territory of the tribes and thus adversely affecting their traditional pastoral economy.

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721 1. "Bedouin raids are usually directed against other tribes or
728 caravans which are attacked and plundered. The toll which is frequently levied on the agricultural settlements on the fringe of the desert is called by the name khuwa, protection money.

361 The pastoral people are fulfilling an important economic function
433 by:

a. supplying the home markets with essential products, and

b. furnishing valuable export articles.

237 Iraqi wool is considered of good quality and finds a ready market
439 in the United States of America and in continental Europe for carpet manufacture.[1] In 1947 Iraq exported 2794 tons of wool at I D 372 349.[2] In 1946 and again in 1948 the wool export was about three times that of 1947.[3] Syria exports products like wool, butter, hides, etc.

233 The following statements will illustrate the valuable contri-
361 bution which the nomads are making to the general economy:
433

"The Bedouin are experts in the breeding of livestock and form a class who afford a valuable contribution to the economic life of Transjordan." 4) "Their (Bedouin of Iraq) occupation of raising livestock is vital to the economy of the country." 5) "Syria cannot afford to lose the meat, milk and wool which are derived from the harvesting of the desert hartage." 6)

Thus in all the countries of the Fertile Crescent, livestock breeding, the primary occupation of the nomad population, appears to be an essential and lucrative industry.

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1. Gamble, 1949, p. 20
2. Ibid. p. 13
3. Data Book, 1951, p. 40
4. Report, 1938, p. 318
5. Jamal, 1945, p. 7
6. Report of the United States-Syrian Agricultural Mission, 1947, p. 23

12: Thesiger T-3 (ca. 1949) 1950 MJ1 Saudi Arabia
Bedouin MJ4

in ever-increasing numbers from as far away as Najran and Dhaufar. 166
They go there at present with the intention of collecting enough money 177
to buy a camel or two, so that they can build up a new herd, or perhaps
marry, when they return to their homelands, but I think that every year
an increasing number will settle down more or less permanently round
the oilfields.

In the desert the Badu need very little to keep themselves alive. Their 438
herds provide them with milk, butter, and occasionally with meat, but 433
they have certain requirements which they cannot supply for themselves. 511
They need cloth and cooking pots, knives, ammunition, an occasional
load of dates or grain, and such simple luxuries as a handful of coffee or
a little tobacco. To get these things they visit the villages or towns and
sell a goat, a little butter, water skins, rugs, and ropes. Life in the desert
ceases, however, to be physically possible if the few but entirely essential
commodities that the desert Arab has hitherto been able to buy in ex-
change for the products of the desert become too expensive for him to
afford, but the rise in the standard of living along the Persian Gulf is
bound to send up the price of food and clothing, and the slightest rise is
now fatal to the desert economy. For the Badu have already lost several 489
important resources. In the past, desert transport was in their hands, but 231
now lorries have largely replaced camels. There was also a constant
demand in the towns and villages for good riding camels, which were
hired by the nomads, and sheikhs would pay big prices for the best breeds.
Now most of the villagers and townsmen drive about in cars. Two years
ago, when I and my companions rode from Sulayil to Laila along the
motor road, the villagers asked us why we did not go in cars "like the
Muslamin." A Badu often loses all or nearly all his animals from disease, 434
but where the tribes are still unadministered he can borrow a mount and 511
join a raiding party and perhaps repair his fortunes. In unadministered
areas they can also levy a certain amount of blackmail off the villagers,
and the village sheikhs are prepared to keep on good terms with the tribes
by giving them presents and much hospitality. Badu, however, meet with
little sympathy from modern and progressive Arab administrators, who
regard them as representing an outlook and way of life which they are
anxious to abolish.

The Badu love money; even to handle it seems to give them a thrill, 181
and I have often thought that when they are talking in their sleep they 577
must be counting piles of dollars. Yet I have never had a single dollar 461
stolen on my journeys, though my money has always been carried in 315
unsealed bags distributed at random among the saddle-bags of my com-
panions. The Badu are always obsessed with tales of buried treasure.
There is *dhahab* (gold) to be found here and *dhahab* to be found there,
under sand dunes, rocks, or even in the middle of quicksands. So
naturally the oilfields draw them like a magnet from all over Arabia,
and, once there, they find that they can get money for sitting in the shade
and guarding something, or for doing work which is certainly easier than
watering thirsty camels on a nearly dry well in the middle of summer.
There is plenty of good food, abundant sweet water, and long hours for 511
sleep. They have seldom had these things before, and now they are being 166

camps move to the Euphrates, or on to the main groups of wells around which cluster tented towns of hundreds of families, odd Sulubba families will remain far out in the desert, drinking from some tiny water hole in a lonely ravine known only to the Sulubba themselves. There they will live almost the lives of wild animals, with only a few sheep or donkeys, hunting gazelle and often dressing in their skins. The Sulubba alone knows the wild animal life of the desert intimately. As a gazelle hunter, his skill is incredible, and many live very largely on gazelle meat and dress in their skins. The Beduins often employ the Sulubba as guides in the desert or consult them regarding routes, grazing, or camping grounds.

Apart from hunting gazelle, and menial work for the Beduins, the Sulubba also live by grazing and breeding animals. Some of them are prosperous and own large flocks of sheep. They have a few camels, but their most distinctive possessions are the white asses. Probably the Sulubba originally bred asses rather than camels for riding purposes, because if they had any good camels the Beduins were likely to covet them. But since no Beduin would stoop to ride an ass, the Sulubba were left in undisputed possession. Some of these animals have marvellously swift paces, and are almost as capable of resisting thirst as is the camel.

During the last ten years, the desert belonging to Iraq, Syria, and Trans-Jordan has been brought under Government control. As a result the Beduins are no longer able to bully the Sulubba quite as unrestrainedly as before and the latter are learning to complain to the police when they are beaten or abused.

In 1919-22, the recrudescence of Wahhabism in central Arabia produced a tremendous outburst

30: Gt. Britain G-5 (ca. 1918) 1920 MJ1 Saudi Arabia MJ1
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travels *in forma pauperis*, he can avail himself, more than one who takes his own tents and servants, of the protection which Arab usage enjoins a Bedouin to extend to one who has touched as suppliant any part of his tent or belongings or eaten of his food. Strictly the efficacy of the last safeguard expires on the third day, when all that was eaten on the first is supposed to have passed out of the body. It is often worth while to appeal from the men to the women, whose instincts of hospitality, independence, and freedom of action are pleasing features of Bedouin life.

It is worth while to remember that no Bedouin society is wholly self-supporting. Even if it can supply itself with sheer food from its own dira, or some purely Arabian oasis—which it rarely can—it is dependent on the outer world for other necessaries, as well as for any sort of simple luxury. Clothing materials, coffee, tobacco, and, to a great extent, arms and munitions can only reach it from ports, or from the settled districts on the fringes of Arabia. Those, therefore, who control such ports or districts can always exercise an influence upon the desert men, however inaccessible, command their behaviour in the long run, and punish their hostility.

From a military point of view Bedouins make very valueless auxiliaries of trained troops, except as scouts and raiders, or, if long, hot, and waterless stages have to be covered, as messengers.

Settled Folk.

The principal settlements will be dealt with in the special chapters on localities (see Chaps. IV ff.), followed by detailed descriptions of the tribes themselves (see Chaps. XIII ff.)

The ubiquity of nomads in Arabia explains and partly excuses common ignorance about the real extent and importance of its urban and village societies. To say that all the Arabs of the peninsula are Bedouins, or that its society is either nomadic or semi-nomadic, is far from the truth. Not only do the fertile coastal districts in the south-east and south-west of the peninsula contain numerous urban and village communities, rooted to the soil and engaged in agriculture and trade, while the goals of the Pilgrimage, Mecca and Medina, with the port of Jiddah, are considerable towns; but, as has already been pointed out, the three groups of oases in the centre support urban settlements, several of which have over 5,000 inhabitants apiece, besides many agricultural villages, large and small.

It is, however, true that all settled communities in Arabia are affected, in various degrees, by the nomad society, which is never far from them, and often surrounds them. There is much intermarriage between the settled and the unsettled folk: chiefs and

30: Gt. Britain G-5 (ca. 1918) 1920 MJ1 Saudi Arabia
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He is wealthy, and owns palm gardens at Ghazāzah near Kerbela, at Baghdādiyah above Hīt, and elsewhere on the Euphrates. Although his wisdom and skill in tribal diplomacy are much vaunted, he is now an old man and not so active as Nūri of the Ruweilah; nor does he concern himself with external politics. He has suffered imprisonment at the hand of the Turks and cordially dislikes them, but his closest link with affairs outside the desert is his landed property on the Euphrates. He fears that if the Hindiyah escape, a part of Sir W. Willcocks's scheme of Mesopotamian irrigation, were to be put into execution, his gardens at Ghazāzah might be partly submerged, and he was inclined to blame the English for their share in that project. He could only with difficulty be reassured on this head, and shown that the better distribution of the water would be of benefit to himself in common with all other land-owners.

A more striking personality is Hākim (Hāchim) ibn Muheid, who with Hākim ibn Qeishlish rules over the Fad'ān, some 3,500 tents in all. Ibn Muheid is possibly second only to Nūri esh-Sha'lān in the Anazah federation. He is a man of about 40, vain, money-loving, and strongly pan-Arab. His position on the middle reaches of the Euphrates enables him to close the riverain road to traffic whenever he pleases. Until the Baghdad Railway is completed, this road is the customary, and by far the shortest, means of communication between Aleppo and Baghdad, and is now connected with Constantinople by a railway, broken only by a short interruption on the Taurus. The Sbā' are less numerous, some 1,800 tents all told; their ruling families are the Beni Murshid and the Beni Hudeib (Hadeib).

Upon all the Anazah the Ottoman Government levies, so far as it is able, a sheep-tax and a camel-tax. The great sheikhs receive Ottoman subsidies, paid with something less than regularity. The sums are not large. A man like Nūri may be given about £20 a month, paid to his agent in Damascus, who uses the money for the purchase of necessary supplies which he sends out to his chief in the desert. The Ruweilah, who raise no crops, are entirely dependent on Damascus for provisions.

The paramount Anazah sheikhs, Ibn Sha'lān, Ibn Hadhdhāl, Ibn Sumeir, and Ibn Muheid, could each of them put into the field from 1,500 to 2,000 men, armed and mounted on camels, with a small proportion of horses. The Sbā' sheikhs could muster another 1,000. The united Anazah forces would therefore number about 9,000 men, if it were conceivable that they could ever be